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TO

Department of State

INFO:

Benghazi, Tripoli

FROM

USINT Cairo

SUBJECT:

Television Interview with Col. Qaddafi, Chairman of the RCC and Commander-in-Chief of Libyan Army

REF

The UAR television program "Open Dialogue" on October 14, 1969 featured a 45-minute interview with Col. Qaddafi, Chairman of the RCC and Commander-in-Chief of the Libyan Army. He answered questions put to him on the origins of the Libyan revolution, the challenges which Libya now faces, and the role to be played by the Arab nation in the coming battle of destiny. No mention was made of the U.S. either in the questions or the answers.

Qaddafi said:

- The reasons of the revolution are deep and they date back to long centuries of coercion, slavery and backwardness as a result of the domination of imperialism and reaction. There are modern reasons such as the setback and the burning of Al Aqsa Mosque which only sped up the revolution.
- The story of the revolution is a long one. The planning for the revolution started during school days and secret meetings were held at that time. Those who entered the army established a central committee which worked separately from those who joined universities or worked in private enterprises. We all avoided parties so as to avoid the narrow partisan view of matters. The Central Committee in the army made a point of recruiting new officers and in this way it became possible to link the old officers with the new and made them join in one revolutionary organization.
- Speaking about the strange incidents which happened on the night of the revolution, Qaddafi related the story of a certain officer

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who was detailed to attack the Palace of the Crown Prince and arrest him. The said officer who attacked the Palace with an infantry force did not find anybody and after firing a few shots inside the Palace he decided to occupy the radio station. Later another armored force which passed by saw that the Palace was not occupied. On searching the Palace the force found that the Crown Prince was fast asleep in one of the rooms unaware of what was happening.

- It was decided to stage the revolution on September 1, because the following day about 30 or 40 Libyan officers were scheduled to leave the country on study missions. Whenever the old regime wanted to get rid of officers they sent them abroad.
- The internal security forces which were equipped with rockets and better arms did not strike at the revolutionary forces partly because they were taken by surprise and partly because they, like all Libyans, were waiting impatiently for the revolution.
- The Libyan army will change completely so that the Libyan officer may become an officer in the full and true sense of the word. The Libyan armed forces would not be built on a regional basis to serve Libya alone but to realize coordination and integration with the Arab forces, especially the armies of the liberated Arab countries. Special attention must be given to the naval forces of the Arab countries on the Mediterranean Sea. The air forces are equally important.
- The challenges and perils which Libya faces are the same challenges and perils which the whole Arab nation faces, namely world imperialism, reaction, and Zionism.
- Libya does not lack national unity or there are no partisan affiliations. Libya does not either suffer from sectarianism or tribalism. A popular organization like the ASU is necessary to maintain national unity.
- The pre-revolution community in Libya is like the pre-July 23 community in Egypt. It suffered from nepotism, favoritism, corruption, bribery, and imperialism. The white foreigner imposed his will and, as a result, the Libyan people continued to suffer from poverty, diseases, and ignorance, at the time man reached the noon. The revolution in Libya will exert efforts to build a liberated progressive society where man leads a dignified life and enjoys justice and sufficiency.
- The challenges which the Arab nation faces are serious and must not be underestimated. We must consider the situation seriously for what happened in the past should not be repeated. The whole Arab nation must pull herself together for the peril threatens the whole Arab nation and not the Palestinians, or the UAR, or the Syrian or Jordanian people alone. The whole Arab front must unite. The front must extend to include the whole Arab nation. I don't want to dot the i's at this time so as to

avoid disputes. When he was asked to speak frankly, especially at this time when the Arab people need clarity, Qaddafi said: Strife must rage inside the Arab homeland until it is purged. Barriers which restrict the movement of the Arab people from the Gulf to the Ocean must be removed. The Arab nation must liberate herself. Aid and articles in the press, and broadcasts do not liberate a country. Charity and aid are given during catastrophes by foreign countries, but the Arabs must mobilize all their potentialities for the battle.

-- The Palestinian resistance made the Arabs regain confidence in themselves. It is necessary that such resistance continues until the Arab regular forces are able to intervene to settle the situation. The Egyptian front constitutes a real menace to Israel and fierce battles rage every day along this front. As to the other fronts, small skirmishes only take place. I wish to see ferocious battles erupt along all fronts.

-- We appreciate the brotherly stand of the UAR which placed all her potentialities at the disposal of the Libyan revolution. The Libyan people cherish special feelings towards the UAR people considering that they are the nearest to Libya.

W. W. W.
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